

Four Poems

By Robert Murphy

Young Thomas

accompanying Blake
 after burning Tyger,
 Merton faced being human
 involved an ordering experience,
 nonpossessive,
 afterall who dare frame
 such fearful symmetry,

 a wholeness rich and fabulous,
 ordered and clear,
 deep and secret,
 not some stupid wooden guy,

 who claiming himself
 why the Delphic visage
 beneath with no knowledge enough,
 found without ability
 humility
 contemplating Emerson
 and so independent Thoreau
 masking something unimaginable
 beyond heroism and incomprehensible,

 wild flung past pitch of grief
 poor Jackself
 be still
 awhile
 has to be spilling out,
 pouring out
 out
 graciousness
 best overflowing joyful loss
 in a terrific obedience
 his one nothing
 a more fruitful
 union
 a deepending communion.

Robert Murphy was an ITMS member from Houston, TX and a former "poet-on-campus" at Jefferson Community College, Watertown, NY; his poetry has appeared in *Contemplative Review*, *West Coast Conscious Review*, *Impact*, *Cloud Chamber*, and *The Merton Seasonal* (Summer 1997). He died in the late summer of 1999.



Robert Murphy

The Turning Toward

Storm in our own soever
 ice tropic of fireflies
 at unceasing moral conflict
 uncaptive in a living struggle
 cutting through great tangled knots
 he must not and cannot
 yield to the conceptual going astray –
 alone terribly obscure
 his fractured religion
 in the hermitage quiet

playing rare afternoons
 intrushing of spirit
 with a flute
 and a couple of books
 under his arm under
 young pretty pine trees
 he named St. Teresa's wood –
 desire enkindle in secret
 something so deep and mute
 so hard even realizing at all

the wide open *fiat* of Miriam
 yes God/Mary merry
 standing on nothing

the nurse has lain
 self upon green linen
 Thomas Merton live again

this violence of doves
 this violet honied sky
 this onliness has come

simple assent to joy
 the barest essential
 inexorably moving on
 towards crisis and mystery –
 my brother the poet
 with the female star
 his culture questioning

fashioning forth from faith
 awakening us gently
 word sigh of great Nature
 making the music of heaven
 herein to the hidden oneself.

Something in Christ

in him exclaiming "That's it!"
 right in the middle of
 himself
 wherever he went
 whenever a beautiful
 and very familiar
 purposelessness
 completely outside
 the conventional source,
 perhaps there is no time,
 a time of beauty
 beyond atheism of the world
 he was born in,

Thomas Merton

seeing the wheelman breaking,
 wording
 the humanity of the feminine
 bringing great pleasure
 prescience,
 he did not know what air is either,

this gospel realmed
 and breathed
 expressing the powerful
 nobility
 far beyond the usual
 ways of knowing,

this hidden dignity
 delivering integrity
 from preoccupation with delusion
 implying
 a spiritual taste

the milk of the lioness
 shattered the cup
 breaking it completely

he had no presence to explain.

Undying

health of Thomas
Merton's Witness best,
in a Word,
myself
how all our members,
manied, mellifluous Louis,
myriad testimony tell
well the never late Uncle Louie,
Chop Suey Louie,
Chuang Tzu of the dearest,
freshest deep down things sing
singer our song
and warm inspiration
celebrating
Sophia glad geography
for Lograire children revisited,
Proverb visited
her hermit in a dream,
always awake in the alone
speaking her butterfly
perfectly
and with joy
how beautifully and now we,
most dear reader,
hear his voice near
splendoring
our own Firewatch!